

4
Borough of Chippenham.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and

Senior Public Health Inspector

for the year

1968



PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

(a) MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

C.L. Broadhead, T.D., M.D., B.Ch., B.P.H. from Jan. 1st-Oct. 30th, 1968.

John E. Wray, M.B., F.R.C., L.D.S.O.P., B.P.H. from Oct. 31st-Dec. 31st, 1968.

Offices: Municipal
Municipal
Chippenham.

BOROUGH

OF

Tell: 561 Chippenham 25 Str. 49.

Also: Medi CHIPPENHAM for the

THE

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1968.

The Public Health and Highways Committee.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

(a) MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

C.L. Broomhead, T.D., M.D., B.Ch., D.P.H. from Jan.1st-Oct.20th,1968.

John R. Wray, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. from Oct.21st-Dec.31st,1968.

Offices: Municipal Offices,
Monkton Park,
Chippenham.

Tel: No: Chippenham 2821, Extn. 49.

Also: Medical Officer of Health for the
Boroughs of Calne and Malmesbury
and
Rural District of Calne & Chippenham
Rural District of Malmesbury.

School Medical Officer.

(b) SECRETARY TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

S.G.V. Williamson, Cert. R.I.P.H.H.

(c) SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

A.E. Eames, D.M.A., M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.

(d) ADDITIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS:

C.W. Pitman, Cert. S.I.B.
Meat & Other Foods Inspector's Cert., R.S.I.
Smoke Inspector's Diploma, R.S.H.

P.M. Dale, Cert. S.I.B.,
Meat & Other Foods Inspector's Cert. R.S.I.
Smoke Inspector's Diploma R.S.H.

J.W.M. Rivers, Cert. S.I. B.
Meat & Other Foods Inspector's Cert. R.S.I.

(e) The Committee of the Borough Council dealing directly with
Public Health matters is :-

The Public Health and Highways Committee.

The Mayor, Aldermen & Councillors,
Chippenham Borough Council.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for the year 1968, in accordance with Regulation 15 (5) of the Public Health Officers Regulations, 1959.

The vital statistics for the Borough for 1968 are generally favourable.

I am grateful to Dr. C.L. Broomhead for helping me at the start of my new appointment, and for the support of the Chairman and members of the Public Health and Highways Committee. I should like also to express my thanks to the Council Officers for their assistance.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN R. WRAY.

A. GENERAL STATISTICS.

| | |
|---|----------|
| Area in acres | 1,843 |
| Population (Estimated Mid-Year) | 18,870 |
| Number of inhabited houses(end of 1968 according to the Rate Book) | 6,110 |
| Number of Council dwellings at the end of 1968 | 2,292 |
| Number of applicants for Council dwellings | 156 |
| Rateable Value | £788,290 |
| Sum represented by the Penny Rate (estimated) | £3,200 |

B. VITAL STATISTICS.

Birth and Death Rates as compared with other areas.

(Births and Deaths per 1,000 population) Standardised*

| 1. <u>BIRTH AND DEATH RATES</u> | <u>Birth Rate</u> | | <u>Death Rate</u> | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | 1967 | 1968 | 1967 | 1968 |
| Chippenham Borough | 15.6. | 15.2. | 11.6 | 10.2. |
| Calne & Chippenham RDC | 18.8. | 17.4. | 9.6 | 11.9. |
| Wiltshire | 17.8. | 17.6. | 10.2. | 10.9. |
| England & Wales | 17.2. | 16.9. | 11.2. | 11.9. |

* Comparability figures are supplied to each District by the Registrar General. These take into account the varying age/sex distribution of the population in different parts of the country. When applied to the local rates, they allow a more accurate comparison to be made between different areas.

2. LIVE BIRTHS

| | <u>Male:</u> | <u>Female:</u> | <u>Totals:</u> |
|----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Legitimate | 137 | 144 | 281 |
| Illegitimate | 7 | 9 | 16 |
| Totals: | 144 | 153 | 297 |

3. STILL BIRTHS AND PERINATAL MORTALITY

Three still births were notified during 1968. The stillbirth rate per 1,000 total births is 10; the comparative rate for England and Wales as given by the Registrar General is 14.

Perinatal mortality means still births and deaths, under one week of age. The rate for the Borough was 17 per 1000 total births, whereas for England and Wales it was 25.

A. GENERAL STATISTICS.

| | |
|---|----------|
| Area in acres | 1,843 |
| Population (Estimated Mid-Year) | 18,870 |
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| Number of Council dwellings at the end of 1968 | 2,292 |
| Number of applicants for Council dwellings | 156 |
| Ratesable Value | £278,290 |
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B. VITAL STATISTICS.

Birth and Death Rates as compared with other areas.

(Births and Deaths per 1,000 population, Standardized)

| 1. BIRTH AND DEATH RATES | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Birth Rate | Death Rate | Birth Rate | Death Rate |
| 1967 | 1967 | 1968 | 1968 |
| 10.2 | 11.9 | 9.6 | 10.2 |
| 10.2 | 11.9 | 10.2 | 11.9 |
| 10.2 | 11.9 | 10.2 | 11.9 |
| 10.2 | 11.9 | 10.2 | 11.9 |

* Comparability figures are supplied to each district by the Registrar General. These take into account the varying age-sex distribution of the population in different parts of the country. When applied to the local rates, they allow a more accurate comparison to be made between different areas.

2. LIVE BIRTHS

| Totals | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|----------------------|
| Male | Female | Total | |
| 157 | 106 | 263 | Legitimate |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Illegitimate |
| 158 | 108 | 266 | Totals: 158 108 266 |

3. STILL BIRTHS AND PERINATAL MORTALITY

Three still births were notified during 1968. The stillbirth rate per 1,000 total births is 10; the comparative rate for England and Wales as given by the Registrar General is 11. Perinatal mortality means still births and deaths, under one week of age. The rate for the Borough was 17 per 1,000 total births, whereas for England and Wales it was 25.

4. INFANT MORTALITY

| | <u>Males</u> | <u>Females</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Under 1 year of age | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Under 4 weeks of age | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Under 1 week of age | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Infant Mortality Rate for the District | | | 7 |
| (per 1000 live births) | | | |
| Comparative Rate for England & Wales | | | 18 |
| (per 1000 live births) | | | |

There was a decrease in the Infant Mortality Rate for the Borough during 1968, by comparison with the previous year when the rate was 10 per 1000 live births. It should be borne in mind that the numbers involved are small, so that there can be wide fluctuation in the rate from year to year.

5. DEATHS - ANALYSIS OF CAUSES OF DEATH.

| | <u>Males</u> | <u>Females</u> | <u>Totals</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Measles | 1 | - | 1 |
| Malignant neoplasm, stomach | 6 | - | 6 |
| Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus | 6 | 3 | 9 |
| Malignant neoplasm, breast | - | 2 | 2 |
| Leukaemia | 1 | - | 1 |
| Other malignant neoplasms etc. | 11 | 12 | 23 |
| Benign and unspecified neoplasms | 1 | - | 1 |
| Diabetes | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Anaemias | - | 1 | 1 |
| Meningitis | - | 1 | 1 |
| Other diseases of nervous system. | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Rheumatic Heart Disease | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Hypertensive disease | 3 | - | 3 |
| Ischaemic Heart Disease | 38 | 36 | 74 |
| Other Heart Disease | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| Cerebrovascular disease | 12 | 14 | 26 |
| Other circulatory disease | 7 | 4 | 11 |
| Influenza | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Pneumonia | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| Bronchitis | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| Other diseases of respiratory system | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Other diseases of digestive system | - | 4 | 4 |
| Hyperplasia of prostate | 2 | - | 2 |
| Diseases of Musculo-Skeletal System | - | 1 | 1 |
| Congenital anomalies | 1 | - | 1 |
| Other causes of perinatal mortality | 1 | - | 1 |
| Symptoms and ill-defined conditions | - | 2 | 2 |
| Motor vehicle accidents | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| All other accidents | - | 3 | 3 |
| Suicide and self-inflicted injuries | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| All other external causes | 1 | - | 1 |
| TOTALS: | 115 | 112 | 227 |

From the above table it can be seen that the most common cause of death was ischaemic heart disease, otherwise known as coronary disease. There were 74 deaths from this cause compared with 53 in 1967. Men die earlier from this disease than women; one man was under 45 years old at death, three were under 55, sixteen were in the age group 55-64, eleven between 65 and 74, and only 7 were over 75. But of the 36 women who died from this disease, twenty-nine were over the age of 75.

There is evidence that regular physical exercise prevents onset, and it may be that the constant housework that women perform daily has an influence here.

There were nine deaths from lung cancer, an increase of three over 1967. It is now accepted that cigarette smoking is a major factor in causation.

Infectious disease is, thankfully, not a common cause of death now-a-days, so it should be noted that there was one death from measles in a child over the age of one year, and one death from meningitis in an infant under four weeks of age. It is hoped that immunisation of infants against measles will eventually eradicate this disease. There are many complications which can follow an attack of measles. These include bronchopneumonia, ear infection and encephalitis. About one in every thousand case of measles develops encephalitis, which can be fatal. A measles Vaccine which had been successfully given to over five million children was eventually thought to have produced a case of encephalitis, so it was withdrawn from the market, so careful the manufacturers have to be. The measles vaccine that is now being used is completely safe.

C. INFECTIOUS AND NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.

As from 1st October 1968, new Public Health(Infectious Diseases) Regulations came into effect. These altered the list of notifiable disease by making yellow fever, tetanus and leptospirosis notifiable, and excluding from the list pneumonia and puerperal pyrexia. The Regulations also extended the powers of the Local Authority to enable them to require a person to stop work, in order to prevent the spread of infection, in cases of food poisoning.

The following tables give details of cases of notifiable disease notified during the past four years:

| | <u>1965</u> | | <u>1966</u> | | <u>1967</u> | | <u>1968</u> | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) |
| Tuberculosis | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Scarlet Fever | 23 | 23 | 25 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Whooping Cough | - | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | - |
| Measles | 273 | 273 | 58 | 58 | 323 | 323 | 7 | 7 |
| Dysentery | 7 | 7 | 1 | - | 8 | 4 | 9 | 9 |
| Food Poisoning | - | - | - | - | 4 | 4 | - | - |
| Infectious Hepatitis | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 |
| Salmonella Infections | 6 | 6 | - | - | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| TOTALS: | 313 | 313 | 102 | 101 | 351 | 347 | 22 | 22 |

- (a) = Numbers originally notified.
 (b) = Final numbers, after correction.

No cases of poliomyelitis, typhoid fever or diphtheria have occurred during the four years covered by the above table.

The immunisation of children against poliomyelitis and diphtheria ensures that no cases of these diseases occur.

(a) Measles. Epidemics usually occur every two years. As there were over 300 cases in 1967, only 7 cases were notified during 1968. Unfortunately one case died. It is hoped eventually to eradicate this disease by regular immunisation of children.

- (b) Tuberculosis. Two cases were notified during the year. Follow-up of contacts is made by the Chest Physician, and environmental reports are made by the Public Health Department.
- (c) Dysentery. Scattered cases occurred throughout the year, mostly in adults and pre-school children.
- (d) Infectious Hepatitis. This is a virus disease endemic in this country, although cases have only recently become notifiable. Most people get their immunity (like they do for measles) in childhood. An attack of the disease may be so mild that it is like a stomach upset, but in a severe attack the patient becomes jaundiced (yellow) and then the disease is easily recognised. The disease is spread only by human carriers by direct contact, so that proper hand-washing after the toilet can limit the spread of severe infection. Unfortunately it has not yet been found possible to grow the virus in the laboratory, so it is still impossible to manufacture a vaccine to protect against this disease.
- (e) Immunisation. I am indebted to Dr. C.D.L. Lycett, the County Medical Officer of Health, for the following statistics of immunisation carried out in the Borough:-

POLIO MYELITIS IMMUNISATION - 1968.

| Age Group | 3 oral doses | 4th oral after 3 inj. or 3 oral. |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1968 | 153 | - |
| 1967 | 134 | 54 |
| 1966 | 2 | 92 |
| 1965 | 4 | 2 |
| 1964 | - | 20 |
| 1959 - 1963 | 42 | 292 |
| 1953 - 1958 | 1 | 10 |
| Others under 16 | - | 3 |
| Others over 16 | 1 | 8 |

TOTALS: 337 481

DIPHTHERIA, WHOOPING COUGH, TETANUS & MEASLES.

| Year of birth: | 1968 | 1967 | 1966 | 1965 | 1964 | 1959-63 | 1953-58 | Others Under 16. |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---------|------------------------|
| Primary Imms. Diph. | 164 | 148 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 20 | 1 | - |
| completed | | | | | | | | |
| during Wh/c. | 163 | 146 | 2 | - | 3 | 2 | - | - |
| 1968 Tet. | 164 | 148 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 21 | 3 | 23 |
| Measles | 5 | 11 | 47 | 72 | 74 | 235 | 31 | - |
| Reinf. injects Diph. | - | 59 | 95 | 9 | 20 | 305 | 6 | - |
| administered Wh/c. | - | 23 | 47 | 3 | 4 | 30 | - | - |
| during 1968 Tet. | - | 59 | 95 | 9 | 20 | 308 | 10 | 4 |

SMALLPOX VACCINATION - 1968.

| Age Group | Months | | | | Years | | |
|-----------------|--------|-----|-----|------|-------|-----|------|
| | 0-3 | 3-6 | 6-9 | 9-12 | 1 | 2-4 | 5-15 |
| Vaccinations | - | - | - | - | - | 27 | 24 |
| Re-vaccinations | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 32 |

D. WATER SUPPLIES

I am indebted to Mr. C.R. Phillips, Engineer to the North Wilts. Water Board, for the following information:-

Water supplies of the North Wilts. Water Board are obtained from underground sources in limestone aquifers, having relatively abundant storage facilities and providing water of a high standard of purity suitable for public supplies. The water is hard in character (between 150 and 360 parts per million total hardness).

The water supplies in the area of the North Wilts. Water Board have been satisfactory in quality and quantity and regular supervision of the quality of water supplies is exercised by submitting samples every week for bacteriological examination.

The latest Annual Report of the Board stated that of reports on 1403 samples submitted from consumers' points of supply, 1332 were satisfactory, having coliform counts of less than 1, 54 had coliform counts of 1-2, and 17 had counts of 3 or more. On occasions when reports of coliform counts are received, investigations and repeat sampling are immediately undertaken and continued until satisfactory reports are received.

Similar supervisory work is regularly carried out on the untreated waters of the Board's sources and the above mentioned Annual Report summarised the results as follows:-

739 samples of raw water were submitted.

553 reported to be excellent with coliform counts of less than 1.

93 were satisfactory with coliform counts of 1-3.

52 were suspicious with coliform counts of 4-10.

41 were reported to have coliform counts of over 10.

Chlorination of all sources is practised with the aim of obtaining chlorine residuals at all consumers' points of supply of between 0.1. and 0.3 parts per million. The only other treatment of water carried out is aeration at the Chippenham sources.

Chemical and mineralogical examination of the water at all sources is obtained at intervals of about 9-10 months and these samples examined to observe any changes which may indicate differing conditions of the sources or the catchment area percolation.

In most of the deep borehole sources in the limestone aquifer, fluoride occurs naturally in quantities of from 0.4 to 0.7 parts per million, but it is usually absent in the waters of shallow wells and spring sources.

All the water supplied by the Board is reported to be not plumbo-solvent. At the request of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in November 1967, an exercise was carried out to examine the quantity of lead in the water after passing through lead pipes. The Counties Public Health Laboratories, London, who carried out the exercise, reported ".....in conformity with the chemical characteristics of these samples, the finding in respect to lead confirms expectation that the water would not exert undue action on lead"

The Public Health Department take regular samples of water and information regarding these is given in the attached report of the Senior Public Health Inspector.

E. SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.
REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

I am grateful to Mr. O.E.W. Street, the Borough Surveyor, for the following information :-

Sewage Disposal.

1. The two sewage disposal works at Westmead and Patterdown serve the Borough and the fringe area.
2. Stage III of the major sewerage improvement scheme is at present with the Ministry for consideration and consists of the following:-
 - (a) The construction of 1/3rd of the new disposal plant near Lower Lodge Farm.
 - (b) A new 48" to 2 1/2" diameter trunk outfall sewer from the new works to Bath Road including twin inverted syphons under the river.
 - (c) The replacement of existing over-loaded and defective foul sewers between Bath Road and the Loyalty Street area.
 - (d) The laying of surface water sewers in Bath Road, Ladyfield Road, Sheldon Road, Loyalty Street etc. and Woodlands Road to take the surface water out of the foul sewers. This is to avoid further disturbance in the same area at a later date.
3. The effluents from the Westmead and Patterdown Sewage Disposal Works are discharged to the River Avon.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Refuse collection in the Borough continues to be operated with the two covered vehicles. House and trade refuse is collected weekly and additional collections are made from premises such as cafes, food and fish shops etc. where food is handled. This work is under continuous review to re-route collections to deal with new houses in the Borough.

Refuse disposal is by controlled tipping at Westmead. The handling and covering of refuse is done mechanically.

In view of the fact that in the future there will not be suitable sites for controlled tipping, the Borough Council has joined together with Calne Borough Council, Calne & Chippenham Rural District Council, Trowbridge Urban District Council and Bradford-on-Avon Urban District Council, to explore the possibility of a Refuse Incinerator Plant to serve the needs of the five authorities.

F. HOUSING.

I am grateful to Mr. G. Gale, the Council's Housing Manager, for the following information.

NEW PROPERTIES (including Pensioners' Bungalows and Flats)

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----------|
| Existing tenants transferred | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5 | |
| Applicants from waiting list | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 17 | |
| Demolition | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 | |
| Air Ministry (Hullavington) allocation | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 | <u>24</u> |

EXISTING PROPERTIES.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------|
| Applicants from waiting list (including pensioner accommodation) | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 82 | |
| Admiralty employees | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 8 | |
| Air Ministry (Hullavington) allocation | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 4 | |
| Staff | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 4 | |
| Demolition | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 8 | <u>106</u> |

NUMBER OF PROPERTIES AT 31st DECEMBER, 1968.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------|--------------|
| Houses | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1,860 | |
| Flats | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | <u>214</u> | <u>2,074</u> |
| Aged persons' bungalows | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 173 | |
| Aged persons' flats | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 24 | |
| Avonside grouped dwelling | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | <u>21</u> | <u>218</u> |
| | | | | | | | | 2,292 | ===== |
| Caravan sites | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 14 | |
| Garages | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 552 | |

During the year 16 applicants were rehoused for the following reasons:-

Demolition Orders 9: Court Orders 3:
Medical Officer of Health's recommendations 4:

In addition 7 mutual exchanges were approved and 15 tenants were transferred for various reasons from one dwelling to another.

7 Caravan sites were vacated and relet during the year.

G. OTHER MATTERS.

Details of Services under the Food and Drugs Act 1955 will be found in the attached Report of the Senior Public Health Inspector, as will the information required under the Factories Act, 1961.

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

For the Year 1968

To: The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Chippenham

Madam Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with much pleasure that I present this, my second Annual Report in respect of the work of the department during 1968.

During the year, 619 complaints or requests for assistance were received and 4,295 visits were made by your officers to homes and other premises in the town.

The pressure of work at the Bacon Factory imposed a considerable strain on the department and I would like to record my appreciation of all members of the staff for the willing way in which they responded to the heavy demands made by this service and also thank my colleagues in Calne and Chippenham Rural District Council for their help on two occasions.

Clearly these difficulties affected the availability of staff for other duties but despite this fact progress was made under most headings and details are set out in the report.

Our increasingly complex pattern of life is changing the approach to Environmental Health and as some of the old dangers tend to recede into the background, so we are faced with new man-made problems, such as the use of toxic pesticides, the effects of noise, the use of solvents and 'disposables' all these and many other hazards are capable of creating Environmental Pollution.

Conveniently, this term has been defined by the World Health Organisation and as we shall undoubtedly be hearing much more about this subject in the future, the full text is set out below:-

"Environmental Pollution is the unfavourable alteration of our surroundings, wholly or largely as a by-product of man's actions, through direct or indirect effects of changes in energy patterns, radiation levels, chemical and physical constitution and abundances of organisms. These changes may affect man directly, or through his supplies of water and of agricultural and other biological products, his physical objects or possessions, or his opportunities for recreation and appreciation of nature"

Many of these problems have aspects which effect other disciplines and it will only be by inter-authority or inter-departmental co-operation that the best interests of the public will be served.

Such co-operation is already a well established part of the service and it is likely to become more important in the future.

In conclusion, I must express my appreciation of the assistance and support which has again been so readily and generously extended to me by Members and Officers of the Council during the year.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

A. E. EAMES.

Senior Public Health Inspector.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SURVEY OF THE DISTRICT

The first table sets out the number of visits made by your inspectors during the year and gives some indication of the wide range of activities which come under the heading of Environmental Health.

Table I Summary of Inspections and Other Visits to Premises

| | |
|--|------|
| Atmospheric Pollution | 85 |
| Caravan Sites | 31 |
| Drainage | 312 |
| Factories | 20 |
| Food Premises | 313 |
| Housing | 459 |
| Housing (Multiple Occupation) | 29 |
| Infectious Diseases | 72 |
| Licenced Premises | 17 |
| Milk Distribution and Dairies | 14 |
| Mobile Shops & Market Stalls | 219 |
| Noise Abatement | 128 |
| Offices & Shops | 97 |
| Pest and Rodent Control | |
| (excluding those made by the operative) | 129 |
| Public Health - General | |
| (including nuisances) | 300 |
| Sampling of Food | 188 |
| Slaughterhouses | 1121 |
| (including resident inspectors) | |
| Swimming Pools | 23 |
| Water Supply and Sampling | 197 |
| Miscellaneous | 195 |
| Special visits in connection with Flooding | 346 |

4,295

As a result of these visits, 322 formal or informal notices were complied with during the year.

HOUSING

The housing situation is again considered under three main headings, and I am indebted to the Town Clerk, Borough Surveyor and Housing Estates Manager for various statistics which have been used in compiling those sections dealing with the supply of new houses and the improvement of older houses.

A. Provision of an adequate supply of new houses

Table II

Number of new houses and flats completed

| | 1968 | 1967 | Average last 10 years |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----------------------------|
| a) By local authority | 62 | 66 | 86 |
| b) By private enterprise | | | |
| i) General use | 80 | 67 | 101 |
| ii) Ministry of Defence | 81 | - | - |
| Total | 223 | 133 | 187 |

Table III

Number of applicants on Housing List.

- a) Number of applicants on general list
- b) Applicants for Aged Persons accommodation

TOTAL:

| 1968 | 1967 | Average Last 10 years |
|------|------|-----------------------|
| 153 | 161 | 210 |
| 97 | 86 | 82 |
| 251 | 227 | 293 |

Table IV

Stock of Houses

Net gain in the number of dwellings after allowance has been made for those demolished

| 1968 | 1967 | Average Last 10 years |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 204 3.2% | 23 0.37% | 51 0.57% |

The number of new houses completed showed a considerable increase over last year, mainly due to development on the west side of the town on behalf of the Ministry of Defence and occupied by service personnel and their families. If these houses are excluded, then the number of units provided for general use by private enterprise and local authority was about the same as last year and considerably below the average over the past 10 years.

The number of persons on the housing list increased slightly (10%) as also did the demand for aged persons accommodation.

In the private sector the demand is more difficult to assess but clearly intending house-owners are having considerable difficulty in obtaining the necessary mortgages.

The high level of interest rates and general financial restrictions are certainly artificially restricting this demand.

One can conclude, therefore, that there was little change in the housing situation during the year and by and large the supply of houses was adequate to meet the demand and to replace those lost through slum clearance or other development.

B. The Maintenance, Repair and Improvement of the Stock of Older Houses.

Table V

Inspection of dwellings

- a) Inspected for housing defects 142
- b) Number of dwellings found to be unfit for human habitation 21
- c) Number of dwellings found to be not in all respects fit for habitation 71
- d) Number of dwellings made fit in consequence of informal action 54
- e) Number of dwellings made fit in consequence of Statutory action under Sections 2 & 3 of the Housing Act 1957 or the Public Health Act 1936. Nil

Table VI

Houses in Multiple Occupation

| | |
|---|-----|
| a) Total number of houses in Multiple Occupation | 55 |
| b) Number of Inspections. | 29 |
| c) Number of Notices served - | |
| (i) to make good neglect of proper standards | Nil |
| (ii) to require additional services or facilities | 7 |
| (iii) direction on overcrowding | 5 |
| (iv) number of control orders made | Nil |

Number of tenancies

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 33 | 10 | 9 | 1 | - | - | 2 |

Table VIII

Improvement of Houses.1) Standard Grants

| | | |
|--|--|----|
| 1. Number of applications | (a) Owner/Occupiers | |
| | Approved | 10 |
| | Refused | - |
| | (b) Tenanted houses | |
| | Approved | 3 |
| | Refused | - |
| 2. Number of dwellings improved. | (a) Owners/Occupiers | 10 |
| | (b) Tenanted | 1 |
| 3. Amount paid in grants in respect of No.2 above... | £1,409.12.8. | |
| 4. Average grant per house | 128. 2.11. | |
| 5. Amenities provided | (a) Fixed bath | 8 |
| | (b) Shower | - |
| | (c) Wash-hand basin | 10 |
| | (d) Hot water supply (to any fittings) | 11 |
| | (e) Water-closet | 9 |
| | (f) Food Store | 9 |

2) Discretionary Grants

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Number of applications approved | 6 |
| 2. Number of applications refused | - |
| 3. Amount paid in grants | £1,932. -. -. . |
| 4. Average grant per house | 356. 8. -. . |
| 5. Number of dwellings improved | (a) Owner/Occupier 4 |
| | (b) Tenanted 1 |

3) Local Authority owned houses improved during the year

88

4. Improvement Areas.

No formal or informal improvement areas have been declared during the year.

Maintenance, Repair and Improvement of the Stock of Older Houses.

Pressure of work in other fields resulted in a slowing down of this programme but limited progress was made and it is hoped to commence area surveys in 1969 as a necessary preliminary to further action.

The number of privately rented houses continues to fall and as these constitute mainly houses built in the early 20th or latter half of the 19th century, the legacy of neglect is transferred to owner-occupiers who frequently lack the resources to both modernise and repair the elderly structures. In dealing with these properties it has been found necessary to phase works over a longer period of time in order to secure a satisfactory standard of fitness.

The joint problems of repair and improvement are likely to be with us for many years to come and it is an essential part of any housing programme to ensure that this work accelerates, if we are to carry out more than the holding action of the past two years. Parliament is at present considering legislation to implement the provisions of the White Paper, Cmd. 3602 *Old Houses into New Homes*, and although it is unlikely to go as far as we would wish, it looks as if there will be some additional incentives for owners of older property to encourage more extensive reconstruction.

A number of houses in multi-occupation were found to lack proper amenities and a progressive reduction in the numbers of tenancies has been achieved with the object of ensuring that houses unsuitable for multi-occupation revert to single family use.

C. Clearance of Unfit Dwellings.

Table VIII

Proceedings under Sections 16 and 23, Housing Act 1957.

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Number of Demolition Orders made | 3 |
| 2. Number of Houses demolished as a result of Demolition Orders. | 1 |
| 3. Number of Local Authority houses demolished | 9 |
| 4. Number of Closing Orders made or undertakings accepted. | 8 |
| 5. Number of families rehoused. | 9 |
| 6. Number of persons rehoused.. | 21 |

Proceedings under Section 42, Housing Act 1957.

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Number of houses demolished as a result of Clearance Area procedure. | Nil |
| 2. Number of houses in confirmed Clearance Areas. | 26 |
| 3. Number of houses in Clearance Areas awaiting confirmation. | 8 |
| 4. Number of families rehoused. | 8 |
| 5. Number of persons rehoused.. | 23 |

The No. 2 Wood Lane Compulsory Purchase Order involving 26 houses was confirmed without modification and acquisition of the properties is proceeding.

A further small Clearance Area in the Butts comprising 8 houses was surveyed and is awaiting confirmation.

Individual action was taken in respect of 4 houses in a court off London Road and a number of isolated properties in other parts of the town.

D. Housing Standards

When one considers that all these properties were dealt with by reference to a standard of fitness which bears little relation to the level of convenience and comfort which should apply in a highly industrialised country with a notoriously fickle climate, then one realises that a further re-appraisal of these standards cannot be long delayed.

The multiplicity of standards which are used range from the Buildings Regulations to that lowest common denominator, the standard set out in Section 4. Housing Act 1957, and this latter standard was based on the Manual for Unfit Houses of 1919, or 50 years ago. The various standards prescribed for improving houses are more realistic, but clearly the government have been influenced by the depressing news that despite the progress made with slum clearance since 1954, there are still 1,800,000 unfit houses through the country. These tend to be concentrated in the North and Midlands, but one can only assume that it is this shadow which has blighted any immediate prospects of raising standards.

Condensation

This is not really a new phenomena, but unfortunately modern design, modern building materials, changes in heating techniques, lack of thermal insulation and changes in the pattern of living, have all contributed to a serious problem, particularly in houses built since 1945.

Condensation takes place when moisture laden warm air meets a cold impervious surface such as an outside wall or window, and moisture is deposited on these surfaces. Mould spores proliferate, and in severe cases the rooms may be virtually unuseable. Occupiers can do much to reduce condensation but fortunately Architects are now more aware of this problem and of the need to ensure that new houses are constructed of such materials and design that condensation on the surface of the inner walls is avoided WITHOUT the necessity of lowering the inside temperature or increasing the ventilation beyond the levels required for health and comfort.

Overcrowding

Only three cases of statutory overcrowding came to my notice during the year and these were abated when the persons concerned were re-housed.

Generally, the overcrowding standard is so low that statutory action can only be justified when really gross overcrowding exists and this is fortunately relatively rare. It is most likely to occur in houses in multiple occupation and usually appropriate action is taken under the Housing Act 1961 before conditions deteriorate to this extent.

Rent Act, 1957

No Certificates of Disrepair were issued under this Act.

Moveable Dwellings

Table IX

| <u>Private Licensed Sites used during the year</u> | |
|--|----|
| Ladyfield Nurseries | 1 |
| Bath Road | 1 |
| 180, Sheldon Road | 1 |
| 52, Lowden | 1 |
| <u>Council owned Sites</u> | |
| Greenway Lane | 4 |
| Bath Road | 13 |
| <u>Sites exempt from licensing requirements</u> | |
| 30, Frogwell | 1 |
| 67, Hill Corner Road | 2 |
| <hr/> | |
| 24 | |
| <hr/> | |

Moveable Dwellings Cont'd

All these sites were used as permanent residential accommodation and have been so used for many years.

As a site licence expires their conditions are being given a critical re-appraisal because standards vary and permanent sites in urban areas should conform to accepted housing conditions.

There will always be a place for good modern caravans and sites, but only if proper amenities, broadly comparable to those provided for other forms of housing, are available for the occupants.

Gypsies and Other Travellers

The Government proposals for more permanent sites for use by gypsies and other travellers are to be welcomed.

Although there are no residential sites in the Borough, as Chippenham lies at the junction of a number of main roads joining the West and South with London and the Midlands, a considerable number of gypsies and other travellers pass through the town.

In the early part of the year, considerable trouble was experienced by vans parking on the site of the demolished Married Quarters accommodation on the West side of the town. The site adjoins other residential accommodation and immediate complaints were received regarding nuisance and conditions on the site. The land is now fenced and no further trouble has been experienced, but it does indicate that until supervised sites are provided, itinerant caravan dwellers are going to continue to use any piece of vacant land irrespective of standards of hygiene or suitability for such use.

PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963

Table X

Registrations and General Inspections

| Class of premises | No. of premises newly registered during the year | Total No. of premises registered at the end of the year | Registered premises receiving one or more general inspections during year |
|--|--|---|---|
| Offices | 3 | 61 | 14 |
| Retail Shops | 2 | 158 | 8 |
| Wholesale shops and warehouses | 1 | 6 | 1 |
| Catering establishments open to the public, and canteens | - | 22 | 5 |
| Fuel Storage Depots | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Totals | 6 | 247 | 28 |

Number of visits of all kinds (including general inspections) to registered premises = 100

Table X Cont'd.

Analysis by workplace of Persons employed in Registered Premises at end of year

| Class of workplace | number of Persons employed |
|---|----------------------------|
| Offices | 915 |
| Retail Shops | 930 |
| Wholesale Departments and Warehouses | 131 |
| Catering establishments open to the public | 129 |
| Canteens | 25 |
| Fuel Storage Depots | Nil |
| | Total 2130 |
| | Total Males 1154 |
| | Total Females 976 |

Number of Inspectors appointed under
Section 52 (1) of the Act

= 4 Public Health Inspectors

Table XI

Analysis of Contraventions found

| Section | No. of Contraventions found | |
|---------|--|----|
| 4 | Cleanliness | 3 |
| 5 | Overcrowding | 1 |
| 6 | Temperature | 5 |
| 7 | Ventilation | 6 |
| 8 | Lighting | 10 |
| 9 | Sanitary Conveniences | 13 |
| 10 | Washing facilities | 4 |
| 11 | Supply of drinking water | 4 |
| 12 | Clothing accommodation | 2 |
| 16 | Floors, passages and stairs | 7 |
| 17 | Fencing exposed parts of machinery | 5 |
| 19 | Training of Young Persons working dangerous machinery | 1 |
| 24 | First Aid | 4 |
| | Other Matters | 6 |
| | Total | 71 |

Table XII

Reported Accidents

| Workplace | No. Reported Non Fatal | No. Invest- igated | Formal Warning | Informal Advice | No Action |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Offices | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| Retail Shops | 3 | 3 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Wholesale Warehouses | 3 | 3 | - | 1 | 2 |

Analysis of Reported Accidents

| | Offices | Retail Shops | Wholesale Warehouses |
|---|---------|--------------|----------------------|
| Falls of Persons | - | 2 | - |
| Handling Goods | - | 1 | 1 |
| Stepping on or Striking against an object | 1 | - | - |
| Struck by falling object | - | - | 1 |
| Other Non-specified | - | - | 1 |

During the year, some difficulties were experienced due to the exemption of parts of premises from provision of the Act, although the nature of the work undertaken and the need for safety, health and welfare of employees, may be identical with those found in registered premises.

In any review of legislation the list of exemptions should be reconsidered and such anomalies as the exemption of premises because they are not used for serving the public (as distinct from club members or residents) should be removed. This exemption can be particularly invidious when dealing with accidents.

It is our practice to encourage prospective developers to consult the department regarding their proposals at an early stage and increasingly owners and their architects are availing themselves of this advice before finalising proposals affecting premises subject to the Act.

This procedure has obvious advantages for both employers and employees.

Factories Act 1961

Only limited parts of this Act are administered by local authorities, the main provisions being the responsibility of Her Majesty's Inspector of Factories.

Table XIII

Inspections for provisions as to Health

| Premises | No. on Register. | Number of | | |
|---|------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | | Inspections. | Written Notices | Occupiers Prosecuted |
| 1) Factories in which Secs. 1.2.3.4 & 6 are to be enforced by local authorities | 9 | 1 | - | - |
| 2) Factories not included in (1) in which Sec.7. is enforced by the local authorities | 64 | 19 | 7 | - |
| 3) Other premises in which Sec.7. is enforced by the local authority (excluding outworkers' premises) | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Total | 76 | 22 | 8 | - |

Cases in which defects were found

| Particulars | Number of Cases in which defects were found | | | | No. of Prosecutions |
|------------------------------|---|----------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| | Found | Remedied | Referred to H.M.I. | from H.M.I. | |
| Secs. 1.2.3.4 & 6 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sec.7. Sanitary Conveniences | | | | | |
| a) Insufficient | 2 | 2 | - | 1 | - |
| b) Unsuitable or defective | 5 | 5 | - | 3 | - |
| c) Not separate for sexes | 1 | 1 | - | - | - |
| Other Offences | - | - | - | - | - |

Outworkers

Section 133

| Nature of Work | No. of outworkers in August. List required by Sec.133 (1)c | No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council | No. of Prosecutions for failing to supply lists | No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Wearing Apparel (making) | 2 | - | - | - |

Outworkers

Section 134

Notices served - Nil
Prosecutions - Nil

FLOODING

Severe flooding took place in the town on the 10th and 11th July, following prolonged heavy rainfall culminating in a freak storm during which 4" of rain fell within 16 hours.

The flooding occurred in two phases; during the first phase the sewers became surcharged over a wide area, manholes were forced and low lying areas of the town flooded. The Hardenhuish Pudding and Ladyfield brooks were overwhelmed by the flood water and debris, and overflowed at a number of points. The second phase was due to the river Avon overflowing its banks and flooding the lower part of High Street and the Westmead area.

Fortunately the flood waters fell during the night and on the 12th July only four cottages were still flooded over ground level.

Over 200 houses were flooded above floor level and many others were affected by flood water to a lesser extent. Inevitably, the flood water was contaminated with sewage, particularly in the first phase, and always it was associated with silt. Many drains, sewers and gullies were blocked, the sewerage works themselves flooded, one on the towns sources of water was taken out of use, the swimming pool contaminated and a number of food shops and a slaughterhouse flooded.

Fortunately major structural damage was limited to one or two houses, but damage of a less obvious, but nevertheless insidious, nature was all too evident. Rising damp, perished plaster, dry and wet rot, warped timbers and the all pervading smell as the flood water receded and drying out took place.

In view of the widespread flooding throughout the West Country the town had to rely on its own resources to clear up the mess and this produced a remarkable response from all concerned in dealing with the immediate problems of drying out, disinfections and restoring services.

PEST CONTROL

1. Rodents

The number of actual infestations treated was 134, a slight increase on last year, and it is encouraging to see that about 20% of these were ascertained by survey, although the department only has the services of a part-time rodent operator.

This situation, although perhaps inevitable in an authority of this size, does make it difficult to maintain effective control. Conflicting demands can disrupt the pattern of treatment or survey.

About 10% of the sewer manholes were test-baited and only slight evidence of infestation was recorded. This is a little surprising in the older areas of the town and could be accounted for by the lack of access to a system of old stone 'docks' known to function in these areas, and to the surcharging of the other sewers pending the completion of the new sewerage scheme.

Again I am pleased to report that there has been no evidence of any resistance to Warfarin, the principal bait used, but this could arise at any time, and it is important that private contracting companies or individuals carrying out their own treatments keep the department informed, particularly where difficulties are experienced.

The following details are in the form required by the Ministry and do not include sewer treatments -

Table XIV

| | Type of Property | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|
| | Non Agricult- ural | Agricultural |
| 1. Number of properties in the district | 7,577 | 13 |
| 2. a) Total number of properties inspected following notification | 110 | 1 |
| b) Number infested by | | |
| i) Rats | 86 | 1 |
| ii) Mice | 17 | - |
| 3. Total number of properties inspected for Rats and Mice for reasons other than notification | 360 | 7 |
| 4. Number infested | | |
| i) Rats | 27 | 2 |
| ii) Mice | 1 | - |

2. Insect Pests

Advice and assistance was given in respect of the infestation of 34 premises by insect pests, including wasps, cockroaches, cluster flies and ants.

3. Rabbits

A number of complaints were again received regarding the presence of rabbits which, because of their changed habits since Myxomatosis, are proving extremely difficult to eradicate in urban areas. Waste ground, scrub or neglected gardens provide all the necessary cover and usual methods of control cannot be readily applied in a built-up area.

4. Pesticides

The present situation regarding the use of pesticides in gardens, homes and food premises, is still far from satisfactory. There is a lack of appreciation of the need to handle and use these pesticides with care. The emphasis on obtaining as near 100% kill as possible can require the use of excessive quantities of pesticides, whereas, if one was prepared to accept a slightly less effective standard of control the amount of pesticide used could be halved.

In my view the following points need stressing, and it is interesting to see that a number of these measures are proposed in impending legislation to control the use of Pesticides.

- 1) A need for more research on very long term effects.
- 2) The use of the more toxic and in particular the stable persistent pesticides, should be drastically reduced and ultimately prohibited.
- 3) Greater caution in recommending the use of pesticides.
- 4) No open food should be exposed directly to pesticides in retail food premises. Here I go further than the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food recommendations which condone the use of certain Thermal Vapourising Units and Mechanical Dosing Units.
- 5) Selective pesticides should be developed rather than attempt blanket control.
- 6) Mandatory control is essential.
- 7) A schedule of residue limits based on the World Health Organisation's findings should be introduced and kept under review.
- 8) Improved dissemination of information by the Ministries concerned. Less emphasis on commercial benefits and more on the health of the operator and general public.
- 9) Improved labelling giving full details of toxicity, stability and dosage rates.
- 10) Mechanical and physical controls all have their place and can provide suitable alternatives in many food premises.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

1. Meat Inspection

There are two licensed slaughterhouses in the Borough and a high level of slaughtering was maintained at both premises throughout the year.

In particular the throughput at the bacon factory increased by 12% and placed a heavy strain on all members of the staff in order to maintain proper standards of meat inspection.

Three inspection points have to be manned the whole time that slaughtering is taking place and due to sickness and leave entitlement, inevitably routine work of the department suffered and on two separate occasions assistance had to be sought from colleagues at Calne and Chippenham R.D.C. to maintain services.

Arrangements have been made to supplement staff engaged on this work and a more satisfactory position should be attained in 1969.

Despite these difficulties, a standard of inspection complying fully with the Meat Inspection Regulations now operates at the Bacon Factory.

Meat Inspection Cont'd.

River Street slaughterhouse provides a different problem due to the slow rate of kill which is spread over the whole working day, but although Inspectors cannot always be present at the time of slaughter, all carcasses and offal are inspected prior to release.

It was not possible to proceed with the institution of laboratory techniques due to the pressures imposed by the increased kill, but this step is inevitable in any efficient meat inspection service.

The high rate of kill created difficulties in the disposal of waste products and in the provision of lairage facilities at the bacon factory, but much needed improvements were being carried out towards the end of the year.

The premises are old however, and are not designed for modern techniques and considerable works will be necessary to secure the rising standards of hygiene now expected in the meat trade.

Table XV

Number of Animals Slaughtered

| | Cattle | Calves | Sheep | Pigs | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| Wiltshire Bacon Company | - | - | - | 98028 | 98028 |
| River Street Slaughterhouse | 1496 | 13 | 2885 | 1472 | 5866 |
| Total | 1496 | 13 | 2885 | 99500 | 103894 |

Table XVI

Carcasses and Offal inspected and Details of Condemnations

| | Cattle | Calves | Sheep | Pigs |
|---|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| Number Killed | 1496 | 13 | 2885 | 99500 |
| <u>All diseases except tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u> | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned | - | - | 2 | 207 |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned | 372 | Nil | 73 | 6282 |
| Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci | 25.5% | Nil | 2.5% | 6.5% |
| <u>Tuberculosis Only</u> | | | | |
| Whole carcasses condemned | - | - | - | 4 |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned | 1 | - | - | 1153 |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis | 0.07% | - | - | 1.2% |
| <u>Cysticercosis</u> | | | | |
| Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned | 8 | - | - | - |
| Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration | 8 | - | - | - |
| Generalised and totally condemned | - | - | - | - |
| Percentage of number inspected affected with Cysticercosis | 0.5% | - | - | - |

Cysticercus Bovis

The location of the cysts found during the routine examination of bovine carcasses and organs was as follows :

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Head - External Masseter Muscles | 1 |
| Heart - Endocardium | 7 |

All the carcasses and offal were refrigerated at a cold store in Devizes in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations before being released for sale.

Cysticercus Ovis

2 cases of generalised *Cysticercus Ovis* ~~was~~ ^{were} discovered in a consignment of sheep during the year. Generalised cases of this parasitic condition are comparatively rare in this country, and there is a lack of information on the actual incidence and location of these cysts in carcasses.

Following enquiries to colleagues in other parts of the country the following general facts were established -

- 1) Localised cases of *Cysticercus Ovis* involving a cyst in the heart is not uncommon, but the incidence is unlikely to exceed 10 per 1,000 and is probably considerably lower.
- 2) The parasite is fairly widely distributed throughout the country.
- 3) The primary site in which cysts are found is the heart, although the diaphragm may also be involved.
- 4) In generalised cases multiple cysts are found in the heart, diaphragm, head, tongue and throughout the carcass.
- 5) Where multiple cysts are found in the heart and/or both heart and diaphragm are involved, then a more detailed examination of the carcass and offal, including incisions in the muscle tissue, is certainly justified.

Weight of Meat and Offal Condemned at Slaughterhouses

45 Tons. 12 Cwt. 73 lbs.

Other Foods

Table XVII

Unsound Food surrendered or condemned at
Wholesale or Retail Premises

| | Tons. | Cwt. | Lbs. |
|-----------------------|-------|------|------|
| Meat, including bacon | | 16 | 55 |
| Cooked Meats | | 2 | 19 |
| Canned Goods | | 13 | 3 |
| Other Foods | 2 | 14 | 33 |
| Total | 4 | 5 | 110 |

With modern marketing methods, there is little need for the carrying of large stocks of foods and supermarkets are certainly not designed for bulk storage. Rapid turnover prevents loss due to deterioration and reduces damage by unnecessary handling. The most common reasons for unsoundness in canned goods is a fault in the processing, incorrect storage of certain pasteurised canned meats, damaged cans and of course, 'hydrogen swell'.

Some retailers sell damaged canned goods off cheaply, but unless strictly supervised, this can cause problems due to the difficulty of judging whether a can is blown and unfit, or whether the ends are distended because the can is dented. Other damaged cans can have pin-hole leaks at the seams which may not be readily apparent to the retailer.

The onus, however, is on the retailer to ensure that the food he sells is fit, and your Public Health Inspectors are always prepared to call and advise in case of doubt.

Disposal of Condemned Meat and Offal

All condemned meat and offal, with the exception of a limited amount of liver, is collected by specialist processing contractors for conversion into animal feeding stuffs and fertilisers, at plants located in Calne and the Bristol area. The liver is despatched in sealed containers to a Trout Farm where it is used for feeding purposes.

The remainder of the condemned meat and other foods is collected and destroyed at the Corporation Tip.

Slaughter of Animals Act 1958

26 persons were licenced to slaughter animals by the use of approved equipment.

New applicants are interviewed and the requirements of the Act carefully explained before they are considered for a Licence.

All animals are slaughtered by humane methods which ensure that they are first rendered insensible by means of a captive bolt pistol or by the passing of an electric current across two electrodes before the jugular vein and arteries are severed.

Regular checks are made to ensure that the requirements of the Act and Regulations are complied with and on a number of occasions, hauliers were warned regarding the handling of pigs as they are unloaded from the transporter lorries.

Consumer Complaints regarding Food

A wide variety of complaints were received regarding unsoundness or foreign matter in food, and it is disappointing to record that many of these complaints could have been avoided by the application of proper stock control and strict attention to hygiene and modern production techniques, by the companies concerned.

Every complaint was thoroughly investigated and among the more interesting cases was a widespread complaint regarding tainted milk which was traced back to accidental contamination on a farm due to incorrect use of disinfectants on milking equipment.

Root Ginger was found to be infected with *Stegobium Paniceum* (Drug Store Beetle) an insect with a redoubtable constitution because not only can it exist on a diet of ginger but can live on strychnine and many other odd substances.

A complaint of glass in Salmon was identified as harmless crystals of Struvite, Hydrous Phosphate of Ammonium and Magnesium, which are commonly found in canned goods of this nature.

Table XIX

Analysis of Complaints

| | | | |
|---------------|---|------------------------|----|
| Cheese | 2 | Confectionery - Sweets | 1 |
| Dried Milk | 1 | Cakes | 2 |
| Fruit Pie | 1 | Fish | 1 |
| Meat | 3 | Cream | 1 |
| Meat Products | 3 | Root Ginger | 1 |
| Bread | 2 | Butter | 1 |
| Beer | 1 | Milk | 2 |
| Canned Goods | 4 | | |
| | | TOTAL | 26 |

Legal proceedings were taken in two instances -

- 1) Sale of Steak & kidney Pies affected with mites. Fined £10.
- 2) Sale of Prepacked Savoury Cheese infested with mites. - Fined £10.

(In conjunction with the Wilts. County Council)

Food Hygiene

330 visits were made to food premises in the town and details of the notices served are set out below.

Although food premises were not actually engulfed by the amount of refuse they produced, it was a very near thing on a number of occasions. Usually reasonable care is taken with the display areas at the front, but frequently storage and preparation areas are inadequate and the tide of refuse which flows towards the rear as the goods pass to the shelves at the front, create congested and untidy areas in which standards of cleanliness and hygiene easily lapse.

Food handlers should be given more positive encouragement by their employers to maintain good standards of hygiene and facilities such as wash-hand basins should be readily accessible in the working areas as well as in the toilets.

Too many food handlers are still unaware of the need for unremitting vigilance when handling food.

'Their health is in your hands' is a slogan which should have real meaning to every food handler, but despite these strictures, 1968 saw continued progress in the hygienic handling of food.

Table XX

Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960.

| | Notices Served |
|--|-------------------|
| Part II General Requirements | 5 |
| Part III Requirements relating to persons engaged in the handling of food. | 20 |
| Part IV Requirements relating to food premises. | 30 |
| TOTAL | 55 |

Table XXI

Compliance with Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960.

| Type of Business | No. | Estimated No. fitted to comply with Reg. 16 | Estimated No. where Reg. 19 Applies. | Estimated No. fitted to comply with Reg. 19 |
|-----------------------------------|-----|---|---|---|
| Grocers | 43 | 43 | 41 | 40 |
| Hotels, Cafes and Restaurants. | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Canteen, Indust. | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Bakers and Conf'rs. | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Fish Fryers | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Butchers | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| Licensed premises | 34 | 34 | 34 | 34 |
| Sweets/Sugar Conf'r. | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Fruit & Vegetables | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Fishmongers | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Dairies | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

Note

In a number of the older small premises, washing facilities required under Regulations 16 & 19 may be sited in, and utilised in conjunction with, the adjoining living accommodation.

It is the practice in all new premises, and wherever practicable, in the older premises, to ensure that separate facilities are provided solely for use in connection with the food business.

Food Premises Registered by the Local Authority

| | |
|---|----|
| Preparation or manufacture of specified foods | 24 |
| Manufacture and Sale of ice-cream | 3 |
| Sale and Storage of ice-cream | 49 |

Mobile Vehicles and Stalls

Food Hygiene (Market Stall & Delivery Vehicles Regulations, 1966)

Despite the numerous exemptions and loopholes, these Regulations are beginning to have an impact on the standards of food hygiene found in stalls and vehicles.

In the market the greatest problem is the protection of open food against contamination and I wonder whether highly perishable food products such as meat or fish should continue to be sold from stalls with open fronts and where there are no means of controlling the temperature. However, insulated containers and a power supply for refrigeration does go some way towards meeting these inherent difficulties.

Stalls at fairs or other functions are improving but inadequate washing facilities in the beer or refreshment tents or failure to clean equipment immediately after use, are still common faults.

Much work under this heading is by informal approach and advice, and this is emphasised by the 219 visits which were made by Inspectors during the year.

Milk and Dairies

A significant milestone was reached in November of this year when the remaining distributor of raw milk in the town ceased this practice and for the first time all milk retailed in the Borough was properly heat treated.

Raw milk is always a potential source of infection and effective heat treatment under proper supervision is the only real safeguard for the consumer.

After the initial trial run, Ultra Heat Treated Milk has become established at a number of retail outlets. All samples were satisfactory and providing retailers use reasonable care in handling its long life at ambient temperature has been confirmed.

Table XXII

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of Registered Dairies | 4 |
| Number of Registered Distributors | 20 |
| Number of Untreated Dealer's Licences | 2 |
| Number of Pasteuriser's/Steriliser's Licences | 2 |
| Number of Dealer's Pre-packed Licences | 20 |
| Number of samples submitted to the Public Health Laboratory :- | |
| Untreated | 11 |
| Pasteurised | 46* |
| Ultra Heat Treated | 6 |
| Sterilised | 4 |
| Biological | 3 |
| Number of Inspections made during the year, including those in connection with sampling | 89 |
| *Two samples of pasteurised milk failed the Methylene Blue Test and the resulting investigation indicated incorrect storage at the retailers concerned, and this has now been corrected. | |

Liquid Egg (Pasteurisation) Regulations 1963

There are no egg pasteurisation plants in the district.

Poultry Inspection

There are no poultry processing plants within the district.

Ice Cream

The policy of concentrating the sampling programme on those sections of the trade where contamination is more likely to take place has confirmed that there is still room for improvement in the preparation of soft ice cream and in the handling of both soft and loose ice cream, particularly in catering premises and mobile vehicles.

Details of sterilisation procedures were circulated but the real answer to this problem is more frequent checks by inspectors to keep staff on their toes and aware of the need to handle ice cream correctly.

Table XXIII

| Results of Samples of Ice Cream | | | Total | % |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------|----|
| | Soft Ice Cream | Other Ice Cream. | | |
| Grade | 15 | 28 | 43 | 77 |
| Grade II | 1 | 7 | 8 | 14 |
| Grade III | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| Grade IV | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 18 | 38 | 56 | |

Bacteriological Sampling of Meat Products

The programme of sampling of meat products was continued and a further 85 samples of sliced meats were submitted for bacteriological examination.

From experience gained during 1967 it was decided as part of the programme to arrange with two large manufacturers to sample hams on their production line and then for the hams to be despatched to retail premises in the town where they were intercepted and comparative samples taken.

A sterile technique of sampling was adopted to ensure that the samples were fully representative and it was found that hams could regularly be delivered to retail premises with counts considerably less than 10,000 at 27°C or 37°C and with no evidence of coliforms. (See Part (b) Table XXIII)

Dr. Richard Gilbert from the Food Hygiene Laboratory visited two retail premises and made a detailed examination of the slicing machines and can openers. This investigation confirmed our own results that slicing machines could add materially to the bacterial count of meat products unless a strict cleaning and sterilisation routine was adopted.

It is anticipated that the results of this survey will be published separately but the following conclusions may be of general interest.

- 1) Hams can be produced commercially and transported 100 miles to reach retail premises with counts of less than 10,000 at 37°C or 22°C.
- 2) No one source of contamination can be singled out although slicing machines can readily add contamination to cooked meats unless a strict sterilisation and cleansing procedure is adopted.

- 3) Routine sampling, using the colony counts as a basis, can indicate unsatisfactory processing, handling or temperature control. They can pinpoint problems and greatly assist fieldwork by Inspectors.
- 4) Temperature control during production, distribution and retail sale is essential.

Table XXIV

Summary of Samples - Meat Products

| <u>Consumer</u> | | <u>Bacterial Count</u> | | <u>Coliform</u> | |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|----|
| a) | <u>Ham</u> | <u>No. of</u> <u>Samples</u> | <u>22°C</u> | <u>37°C</u> <u>Present</u> | |
| | | 32 | +50m 5 | 3 | 16 |
| | | | 10-50m 3 | 1 | |
| | | | 1-10m 8 | 8 | |
| | | | 100,000- 1m 8 | 8 | |
| | | | 10,000-100,000 5 | 7 | |
| | | | -10,000 3 | 5 | |
| | | | <u>32</u> | <u>32</u> | |
| <u>Special Survey undertaken with Manufacturers</u> | | | | | |
| b) | <u>Ham</u> | 26 | 1-10m 1 | - | 1 |
| | | | 100,000- 1m 1 | 1 | |
| | | | 10,000-100,000 - | - | |
| | | | -10,000 24 | 25 | |
| | | | <u>26</u> | <u>26</u> | |
| c) | <u>Brisket</u> | 15 | +50m 2 | 2 | 5 |
| | | | 10-50m 1 | - | |
| | | | 1-10m 2 | 1 | |
| | | | 100,000- 1m 5 | 5 | |
| | | | 10,000-100,000 5 | 7 | |
| | | | -10,000 - | - | |
| | | | <u>15</u> | <u>15</u> | |
| d) | <u>Silverside</u> | 12 | +50m - | - | 3 |
| | | | 10-50m 1 | - | |
| | | | 1-10m 1 | - | |
| | | | 100,000- 1m 2 | 3 | |
| | | | 10,000-100,000 6 | 5 | |
| | | | -10,000 2 | 4 | |
| | | | <u>12</u> | <u>12</u> | |

Sampling of Fresh Cream

At the end of the year this authority was asked to take part in a survey of Fresh Cream with a view to introducing the use of Bacteriological Standards on similar lines to those already existing for other Dairy Products.

6 Samples were taken and in three instances unsatisfactory results were reported by the Laboratory.

WATER SUPPLY

The water is supplied to Chippenham by the North Wilts Water Board and is normally drawn from boreholes at Rodbourne, Charlton and Chippenham and the sampling programme is designed to cover each supply.

Details of the samples submitted for bacteriological examination are set out in the following table, and it will be seen that in four instances evidence of slight contamination was reported by the Public Health Laboratory. Two of these samples were due to contamination of the reserve supply to a large institution in the area, and this particular supply has now been sealed off. The other two cases were isolated instances and repeat samples were found to be satisfactory.

In July a major breakdown occurred in the water supply to about one third of the town and the supply to parts of the town was not re-connected until 16-18 hours later, by which time many properties had exhausted their storage tanks.

The incident emphasised the dependence of urban areas on a constant supply of water and that without our 35 gallons per head per day, a serious health hazard would soon arise.

In addition to the mains supply, regular samples were taken from a private bore serving a food factory.

Table XXV

Results of Water Samples

| | Satis- factory | Coliform Organisms Detected | Total | Residual Chlorine Present | |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|----|
| | | | | Yes | No |
| Mains Supply | 171 | 4 | 175 | 161 | 14 |
| Private Bore | 9 | - | 9 | 9 | - |
| Total | 180 | 4 | 184 | 170 | 14 |

Swimming Pool

The open air swimming pool and paddling pool at Monkton Park are visited weekly during the season and 30 samples were taken to check the levels of free Chlorine, and to ensure that the pH of the water was satisfactory.

Average Readings - Chlorine .5 ppm pH 7.6

The pool was slightly contaminated by flood water in July but within 24 hours the filtration system had clarified and purified the water to the required standards and the pool was re-opened.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

Domestic Pollution

The majority of new houses constructed during the year were provided with gas or oil-fired heating installations, which add little to the visible air pollution. Occasionally fire-places in new houses are adapted later to burn solid fuel and where bituminous coal is burned these houses can easily be picked out by the smoke plume tailing down over the roofs, but most people now accept the need to reduce pollution and the main problem is the older houses not equipped to burn modern smokeless fuels.

Smoke control areas in all urban authorities are inevitable and it is important that when people alter their fireplaces they ensure that the new installations can operate smokelessly.

Industrial and Commercial Pollution

During the year 15 premises were visited following excessive emissions of dark smoke due to defective plant or the burning of waste products.

Proper maintenance of oil -fired equipment is essential and sometimes tends to be neglected until trouble, signified by the emission of smoke, occurs.

Three cases involving the emission of grit, dust or acid smuts caused considerable nuisance and one plant in particular periodically blanketed the surrounding area with large acid smuts until the solution could be found.

Again considerable work was carried out in connection with the prevention of pollution. Not only the visible smoke, grit or smuts, but the more insidious gaseous pollutants such as Sulphur Dioxide.

The following table sets out the position regarding new installations.

Table XXVI

Section 3. New Installations

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| a) Number of notifications | 10 |
| b) Applications for prior approval | - |
| c) Alterations required | 2 |

Section 6. New Installations - Grit and Dust

| | |
|---|-----|
| a) Number of plans submitted and approved | Nil |
|---|-----|

Section 10. Chimney Heights

| | |
|---|---|
| a) Number of plans showing new chimneys | 7 |
| b) Number of cases in which alterations were required | 5 |
| c) Number approved | 7 |
| d) Number of chimneys erected not subject to control | 1 |

Pollution from Road Vehicles

This takes two forms, one the visible smoke associated with diesel engines particularly where inefficient combustion is taking place, and the invisible gaseous pollutants for which petrol engines must also share the blame.

There is no doubt in my mind that pollution from this source is a significant factor along the A4 and A420 trunk roads, particularly in the narrow sections in the centre of the town.

We are told that we must wait until the M4 is completed before any improvement can be expected and so the procession of lorries, vans, buses, coaches and cars which pass through the town will continue to add their contribution to the level of pollution in the town for some years to come.

Self Service Launderettes

Proposals for one of these establishments was received during the year and it is likely that others will follow.

Whilst providing a much needed service, they can create problems due to noise or fume emissions and it is important that as far as possible, these hazards are dealt with at the design stage.

NOISE

During the year the department concentrated on securing a reduction in the amount of noise caused by the use of pneumatic road drills.

This campaign has had considerable success although we still get cases where operatives have removed muffles unbeknown to the management, but these lapses are getting less frequent and the next problem is to ensure that the muffles are properly maintained and to deal with other noisy plant associated with road works.

Twenty-two complaints were received from the public and 128 visits were made by the staff in connection with these complaints and general preventative work. Further details have been set out in the following table -

Table XXVII

| Number of nuisances | <u>Confirmed</u> | <u>Remedied</u> |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Industry | 4 | 2 |
| Commercial | 14 | 12 |
| Domestic | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 19 | 15 |

As I said last year, and must repeat this year, as the efficiency and power output of machines is raised, manufacturers must pay more attention to the increased noise and vibration problems which are associated with such changes.

The British Standard No.4142 in respect of industrial noise sets a useful standard, but complaints can still occur when levels are within the ranges held to be satisfactory, and in investigating any complaint a very careful appreciation of all the factors in the situation must be made before reaching a decision and suitable measuring equipment is absolutely essential in any evaluation.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

75 Visits of enquiry were made in connection with infectious diseases, intestinal infections and food poisoning.

The Disinfecting Station at Frogwell has modern equipment and is maintained by this department in a state of constant readiness for use by five authorities in the area, who share the capital and running costs.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS (WASTE FOODS) ORDER 1957

Three premises remain licensed under the Act and process waste food for use in the adjoining piggeries.

PET ANIMALS ACT 1951

Two pet shops were licensed and both premises have been satisfactorily maintained.

DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

During the year, 137 sewers and drains were found to be choked or otherwise defective and 312 visits were made in connection with the remedial works.

In January the Council approved phase III of their major programme to renew the town's sewerage system and treatment works. It is a matter of concern that at the end of the year the proposals were still awaiting approval by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and it is to be hoped that this work will, in fact, commence during the coming year.

Despite the magnitude of the task, it is important that the replacement of the existing overloaded system is carried out as soon as possible.

HEALTH EDUCATION

In all aspects of Environmental Health it is essential that compulsion is supplemented, and wherever possible replaced, by persuasion. This is particularly important in connection with Food Hygiene and members of my staff are always available to talk to food handlers on this subject.

By and large, members of the public are not aware of much of the work carried out in their name, and for their benefit, in the field of Environmental Health. Frequently their willing co-operation is required and this can only be secured by ensuring that they are better informed.

